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SIPDIS

FOR IIP

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: EVALUATION FOR IIP SPEAKERS ANTHONY CEJA AND MONICA TINAJERO, GANG PREVENTION PROGRAM, TRACKERS 31215 AND 31216

¶1. Summary: Anthony Ceja and Monica Tinajero from San Diego's Education Department spoke to a variety of groups during their three-day program in Guadalajara and Tepic. They met with educators and public security departments, an association of rehabilitated gang members, and students to explain how their program "Fighting Violence and Gangs in Schools and the Community" helps rescue youngsters from gangs and gives them practical skills for a better life. This program was a tremendous success because of the outstanding professional and personal qualities of the speakers. End summary.

¶2. Dates: April 27 - May 1, 2008. FY-08.

¶3. MPP theme and audience reached: The program supported Post's MPP theme of Public Security. It involved direct audience contact with about 900 persons. The audiences included members of the State of Jalisco Civic Public Security Council, the Guadalajara Security Secretariat, the Nayarit State Attorney General's Office, faculty members of law schools, the Police Department's Prevention Unit, NGOs, students, and the media.

¶4. Justification and objectives: Several local organizations expressed the need for programs on youth and gang prevention, an area we had not addressed recently. While Guadalajara and Tepic enjoy a relatively good level of public security, gang and drug activity continues to grow, and there are signs that the problem is growing. The appearance of more graffiti throughout the cities has raised concerns about increased gang activity. Through this program we hoped to engage our contacts in a discussion about the challenges we face on both sides of the border to keep young people out of a violent gang lifestyle.

¶5. Description of activities: In Guadalajara the specialists participated in a seminar for public security officials, a seminar for a large audience of government officials, educators and NGOs on violence and gang prevention, and a lecture to a gang rehabilitation association. In the city of Tepic, Nayarit, they spoke to a group organized by the State Attorney General's Office that included police in the prevention unit, educators, and NGO associations, and later met for a discussion with University of Nayarit officials, professors and students. The speakers gave interviews to several press and media outlets.

¶6. Results/Impact: The speakers encouraged citizen participation and promoted innovative techniques for intervention against gang activity and drug abuse, both for youth and their parents, as well as law enforcement and educational institutions. Their efforts strengthened the community and social service agencies to be effective voices against gangs and drug traffickers and encouraged rehabilitation of former gang members. The problems caused by gangs in Mexico reach beyond graffiti and are a national security issue for both Mexico and the U.S. The speakers' addressed other consequences of gang activity such as weapons trafficking and trafficking in persons, especially among girls for sexual/commercial exploitation. One of their most important messages conveyed the

need for cooperation and trust among authorities of all types, schools, social workers, and parents to be successful in fighting gang activity. Bringing together these interdisciplinary and inter-agency audiences made them think more about collaborative efforts and the important role of education.

¶7. Media coverage: Ceja and Tinajero gave interviews to a cable TV news program and a radio station. The University of Guadalajara's media outreach program produced a TV report, a radio news program, and an article for its weekly paper from its interview with these guests.

¶8. Non-USG support/funding: None.

¶9. Quality of U.S. support and IIP offices involved: The support we received for this program was excellent, and we appreciated this I-bucks opportunity. Estelle Baird offered useful guidance for the program planning. Many thanks from PAS Guadalajara for IIP's hard work and financial support.

RAMOTOWSKI